

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAIGON 00930 251046Z

15 R  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
----- 038367  
O 251035Z JAN 75  
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2176  
INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 930

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: OREP, VS, CD  
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO INDOCHINA

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB FROM AMBASSADOR MARTIN

REF: STATE 15069

1. I SPOKE WITH PRESIDENT THIEU THIS MORNING AND HE INDICATED HE WOULD BE MOST PLEASED TO RECEIVE A CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION SUCH AS YOU DESCRIBE. IT IS IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, THAT THE PRESIDENT'S ACTION IN NAMING THE DELEGATION BE ANNOUNCED AS TAKEN EITHER AT INVITATION OF PRESIDENT THIEU, OR, IF WE PREFER TO HAVE IT AS AN INITIATIVE OF PRESIDENT FORD, IT BE ANNOUNCED AS HAVING RECEIVED THE PRIOR CONCURRENCE OF PRESIDENT THIEU. PRESIDENT THIEU AND FOREIGN MINISTER BAC ARE ALREADY ACTIVELY PLANNING TO INVITE A GROUP FROM OUR CONGRESS TO COME HERE AS A MEASURE TO BRING ABOUT GREATER AWARENESS IN THE CONGRESS OF THE NATURE OF NORTH VIETNAMESE AGGRESSION, PARTICULARLY IN THE WAKE OF THE CAPTURE OF PHUOC LONG PROVINCE BY THE NVA. NOTE FROM REFTEL THAT YOU ARE PREPARING TO SUPPORT A RECOMMENDATION TO THE SECRETARY CONCERNING THIS MATTER. IF THE PROPOSAL IS NOT TO GO FORWARD, PLEASE INFORM US AT ONCE SO THAT THE GVN CAN MOVE PROMPTLY WITH ITS OWN PLANS.

2. AS YOU MAY REMEMBER, LAST MAY AMBASSADOR PHUONG ACTING ON THIEU'S BEHALF INVITED SIX SENATORS AND SIX REPRESENTATIVE TO  
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COME TO SOUTH VIET-NAM IN CONNECTION WITH THE CONTROVERSY OVER

"POLITICAL PRISONERS". ALTHOUGH NONE WAS ABLE TO ACCEPT BECAUSE OF WATERGATE AND OTHER PREOCCUPATIONS, THE GVN REALLY INTENDED TO GIVE THOSE INVITED FREEDOM TO GO WHERE THEY WISHED IN THEIR EFFORT TO REACH A TRUE JUDGEMENT. I, THEREFORE, BELIEVE THAT THERE WILL BE ABSOLUTELY NO QUESTION OF THE PRESIDENTIAL DELEGATION'S HAVING COMPLETE FREEDOM, WITHIN THE NEEDS OF SECURITY, TO GO WHERE THEY WISH AND TALK WITH WHOM THEY PLEASE

3. I DO RECOMMEND THAT AN EFFORT BE MADE TO AVOID FEBRUARY 10 AND 11, WHEN OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED FOR TET AND MOST VIETNAMESE WILL BE WITH THEIR FAMILIES.

4. SINCE IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO HAVE BEEN INVITED TWICE AND STILL REFUSE YOU MIGHT WISH TO CONSIDER SOME OF THE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO WHOM INVITATIONS WERE EXTENDED LAST MAY:

(A) SENATORS EDWARD BROOKE, HUBERT HUMPHREY, DANIEL K. INOUE, CHARLES H. MATHIAS, JR., JACOB K. JAVITS, STUART SYMINGTON, AND (B) CONGRESSMEN JOHN B. ANDERSON, WILLIAM G. BRAY, GEORGE H. MAHON, THOMAS E. MORGAN, JOHN J. RHODES, AND MORRIS K. UDALL.

5. I BELIEVE THAT SUCH A MISSION HAS THE POTENTIAL FOR DOING A WORLD OF GOOD BOTH IN REASSURANCE TO THE VIETNAMESE AND IN STRENGTHENING OUR EFFORTS IN THE CONGRESS TO GET FAVORABLE ACTION ON THE SUPPLEMENTAL. THERE IS AN EQUALLY GREAT DANGER IF, IN OUR PASSION TO BE "EVEN-HANDED", WE INCLUDE SOME OF THE RABID OPPONENTS. THE LIST ABOVE WAS CAREFULLY CHOSEN TO EXCLUDE BOTH DIE-HARD SUPPORTERS OR DIE-HARD OPPONENTS, AND TO INCLUDE THOSE WHOSE REPUTATION FOR INTEGRITY AND FAIRNESS WERE UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED ON ALL SIDES. WE SHOULD USE THE VISIT TO GET THE WHOLE TRUTH ABOUT THE CURRENT REALITIES IN VIET-NAM BEFORE THE CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC. IF THE VISIT TAKES PLAVE, WE MUST CAREFULLY CONSIDER HOW IT CAN BE BEST USED TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL.  
MARTIN

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Margaret P. Grafeld  
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**TAGS:** OREP, VS, CD  
**To:** STATE  
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